

Staff Report



October 25, 2016

To Board of Education (Public Meeting)

From Ray Velestuk, Secretary-Treasurer

Re **Water Quality Update**

This report is being presented to the Board for information.

BACKGROUND

In response to the District's Water Quality Update, issued in September, Pinchin West Ltd. (PWL) was brought on as an independent consultant to conduct additional water testing at 21 buildings. The primary purpose for PWL's investigation was to determine whether the building plumbing systems or water entry points from the municipality were the cause of elevated levels of lead.

PWL undertook a sampling at the 21 sites, following a methodology by the Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC), along with reviewing the *Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality* (GCDWQ) and *BC Water Quality Guidelines for Drinking Water* (BCDWQ). Sample locations included (i) the closest water sources (fountains, kitchen sinks, bathroom sinks) to the water entry point and (ii) all water sources where the pipe branch run ends.

CONCLUSIONS

Upon completion and analysis of the water samples, results were classified into three groups:

- 1) **Group A** - Analysis results reported lead concentrations *below* the GCDWQ and BCDWQ guidelines in each of the stagnant and flushed water samples.
 - 1) Ross Elementary
 - 2) South Poplar
 - 3) STaRT
 - 4) Facilities Building
- 2) **Group B** – Analysis results reported lead concentrations *above* the GCDWQ and BCDWQ guidelines in select water samples at branch run ends.
 - 1) Mt. Lehman Elementary
 - 2) Aberdeen Elementary
 - 3) School Board Office
 - 4) Ten-Broeck
 - 5) William A. Fraser Middle School
 - 6) CORE
 - 7) Terry Fox

- 3) **Group C** – Analysis results reported lead concentrations *above* the GCDWQ and BCDWQ guidelines in select water samples at branch entry points *and* branch run ends.
- 1) Abbotsford Arts Centre
 - 2) Abbotsford Virtual Centre
 - 3) Aboriginal Centre
 - 4) Bakerview Centre for Learning
 - 5) Centennial Park Elementary
 - 6) Chief Dan George Middle
 - 7) John Maclure Community School
 - 8) North Poplar Campus
 - 9) Upper Sumas Elementary
 - 10) WJ Mouat Secondary

NEXT STEPS

Facilities & Maintenance will work towards a 3 tiered approach for achieving safe water quality throughout the District.

- A. Buildings that fall under Group A will be taken off of the District’s short term water quality action plan. Building personnel and parents will be notified that drinking water is safe.
- B. Buildings that fall under Group B will implement the use of a water filtration system on drinking fountains with permanent repair on branch lines. Water coolers, as part of the District’s short term water quality action plan, will remain in the buildings until repairs and additional testing have been completed.
- C. Buildings that fall under Group C will be reviewed with Fraser Health to discuss recommended remedies, as suggested by PWL. Anticipated next steps are to install a water filter at the water entry point, retest water sources and determine lead level failures (e.g. branch/plumping fixtures). Once identified and addressed permanent repairs will take place.

FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS

The costs for the necessary facility improvements (groups B & C) will come from additional funding received from the School Enhancement Program. The school district has received approval from the Ministry of Education for an additional \$840,000 in SEP funding to deal with these water quality improvements. This increases the SEP funding to \$1,308,000 in 2016-17.

This school district website will be updated with this information.